

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
ANDERSON/GREENWOOD DIVISION

Bobby Stuckey,
a/k/a Bobby B. Stuckey

Plaintiff,

vs.

Major Thierry Nettles, Captain Ann
Sheppard, Lt. Patricia Brown, Sgt.
Travis Guess, Sgt. Joseph Bass,
Officer Wadina Starks,

Defendants.

) C/A No.: 8:14-cv-03612-JMC-JDA

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REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION
OF MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Plaintiff brought this action seeking relief pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1983. On February 16, 2015, Defendants filed a motion for summary judgment. [Doc. 45.] By Order of this Court on February 18, 2015, pursuant to *Roseboro v. Garrison*, 528 F.2d 309 (4th Cir. 1975), Plaintiff was advised of the summary judgment/dismissal procedure and the possible consequences if he failed to respond adequately. [Doc. 46.] Despite this explanation, Plaintiff failed to respond to the motion.

As Plaintiff is proceeding pro se, the Court filed an Order on March 27, 2015, giving Plaintiff through April 17, 2015, to respond to the motion for summary judgment. [Doc. 49.] Plaintiff was specifically advised that if he failed to respond, this action would be dismissed for failure to prosecute. [*Id.*] However, Plaintiff has failed to respond to the motion.

Based on the foregoing, it appears Plaintiff no longer wishes to pursue this action. “The Federal Rules of Civil Procedure recognize that courts must have the authority to control litigation before them, and this authority includes the power to order dismissal of an

action for failure to comply with court orders.” *Ballard v. Carlson*, 882 F.2d 93, 95 (4th Cir. 1989) (citing Fed. R. Civ. P. 41(b)). “Federal courts possess an inherent authority to dismiss cases with prejudice sua sponte.” *Gantt v. Md. Div. of Corr.*, 894 F. Supp. 226, 229 (D. Md. 1995) (citing *Link v. Wabash R. Co.*, 370 U.S. 626 (1962); *White v. Raymark Indust., Inc.*, 783 F.2d 1175 (4th Cir. 1986); *Zaczek v. Fauquier Cnty., Va.*, 764 F. Supp. 1071, 1074 (E.D. Va.1991)).

The Fourth Circuit, in *Davis v. Williams*, recognizing that dismissal with prejudice is a harsh sanction that should not be invoked lightly, set forth four factors for determining whether Rule 41(b) dismissal is appropriate:

- (1) the degree of personal responsibility on the part of the plaintiff;
- (2) the amount of prejudice to the defendant caused by the delay;
- (3) the presence or absence of a drawn out history of deliberately proceeding in a dilatory fashion; and
- (4) the effectiveness of sanctions less drastic than dismissal.

588 F.2d 69, 70 (4th Cir. 1978) (citing *McCargo v. Hedrick*, 545 F.2d 393, 396 (4th Cir. 1976)). Subsequently, however, the Fourth Circuit noted that “the four factors . . . are not a rigid four-pronged test,” and whether to dismiss depends on the particular circumstances of the case. *Ballard*, 882 F.2d at 95. For example, in *Ballard*, the court reasoned that “the Magistrate's explicit warning that a recommendation of dismissal would result from failure to obey his order is a critical fact that distinguishes this case from those cited by appellant. . . . In view of the warning, the district court had little alternative to dismissal. Any other

course would have placed the credibility of the court in doubt and invited abuse.” *Id.* at 95–96.

As Plaintiff is proceeding pro se, he is personally responsible for his failure to file a response. Plaintiff has had over two months to respond to the motion for summary judgment. Plaintiff's initial response was due by March 26, 2015 and, despite being advised of the possible consequences if he failed to adequately respond, Plaintiff elected not to respond. The Court filed a second Order, reminding Plaintiff a response was due and giving him additional time—until April 17, 2015—to respond.* The Court has warned Plaintiff the case would be dismissed pursuant to Rule 41(b) if Plaintiff failed to file a response. Despite this explanation, Plaintiff has elected not to respond. Because Plaintiff has already ignored Court Orders and deadlines, sanctions less drastic than dismissal would not be effective.

*The Court is aware that the Order was returned as undeliverable [Doc. 56]; however, the Court has no way to ensure its delivery without an updated address. Plaintiff was informed he was required to notify the Court of any changes of address and has not done so. Plaintiff has not filed any documents with the Court since an Amended Reply was mailed on January 26, 2015. Plaintiff has not received any mail from the Court since February 18, 2015. Accordingly, the Court recommends the Complaint be dismissed for failure to prosecute and failure to comply with court orders.

Wherefore, based upon the foregoing, the Court recommends the case be
DISMISSED pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 41(b).

IT IS SO RECOMMENDED.

s/Jacquelyn D. Austin
United States Magistrate Judge

April 20, 2015
Greenville, South Carolina